

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner for acknowledge the claim for priority and receipt of certified copies of all the priority documents. Applicants also respectfully request that the Examiner state whether the drawings are acceptable.

Claims 6-9, drawn to the unelected invention, have been canceled without disclaimer of the subject matter or prejudice against filing in a subsequent Divisional application. Applicants have also added new claims 10-13.

Accordingly, claims 1-5 and 10-13 remain pending in the application.

Reexamination and reconsideration of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the amendments above and the remarks below.

35 U.S.C. § 102 & 103

The Office Action rejected claims 1-3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over Schneider et al. U.S. Patent 6,263,829 (“Schneider”), and rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schneider in view of Sakai U.S. Patent 3,717,439 (“Sakai”).

Applicants respectfully traverse those rejections for the following reasons.

Claim 1

Among other things, the apparatus of claim 1 includes at least three cleaning gas nozzles provided at regular intervals on a sidewall of the chamber around the chuck.

Applicants respectfully submit that Schneider does not disclose any apparatus including such a feature.

The Office Action states that such a feature is disclosed in FIG. 9b of Schneider and the associated text.

Applicants respectfully disagree.

At the outset, FIG. 9b of Schneider does not even show any chamber at all. Furthermore, Schneider clearly shows in all of the embodiments - except that shown in FIGs. 8 and 9a - that the gas nozzles are provided on the support 20, not the chamber 15. Meanwhile, in the embodiment shown in FIG. 8 and FIG. 9a, the

nozzles are clearly not provided on the sidewall of the chamber 15.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Schneider.

Claims 2-3 and 5

Claims 2-3 and 5 depend from claim 1 and are all deemed patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 4

Claim 4 depends from claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that Sakai does not remedy the shortcomings of Schneider with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 4 is patentable over any possible combination of Schneider and Sakai for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

NEW CLAIMS 10-13

By this Amendment, Applicants have added new claims 10-13. Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of each of the claims 10-13 is fully supported by the originally-filed specification and drawings, and furthermore respectfully submit that each of the claims 10-13 is patentable over the cited art of record for at least the following reasons.

Claim 10

Among other things, the apparatus of claim 10 includes a plurality of process gas nozzles disposed on a sidewall of the chamber for providing a process gas into the chamber, and at least three cleaning gas nozzles disposed on the sidewall of the chamber spaced apart laterally from the chuck for providing a cleaning gas into the chamber, wherein the cleaning gas nozzles are all disposed below the process gas nozzles in the chamber.

An exemplary embodiment is disclosed in the specification with respect to FIG. 3, showing the at least three cleaning gas nozzles 32a disposed below the process gas nozzles 18 (see also page 7, lines 6-9).

Applicants respectfully submit that no combination of Schneider and Sakai would produce an apparatus including such a combination of features. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 10 is patentable over the cited prior art.

Claims 11-13

Claims 11-13 recite similar features to those recited in originally filed claims 2-4 and all depend from claim 10. Accordingly, for at least the reason set forth above with respect to claim 10, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11-13 are all patentable over the cited prior art.

CONCLUSION


In view of the foregoing explanations, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and reexamine the present application, allow claims 1-5 and 10-13, and pass the application to issue. In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact Kenneth D. Springer (Reg. No. 39,843) at (703) 715-0870 to discuss these matters.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0238 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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